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Montana State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee

MONTANA SOICC

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Volume Seven - Number Three

MONTANA SOICC NEWSLETTER

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Montana's Talent Recognized Nationally

Sixteen people nationwide were recently selected to be members of the National Career Development Guidelines Training Cadre. **Donna Berkhof, career counselor at the Adult Education Center for Great Falls Public Schools, was designated as a member of the cadre.** Other cadre members include counselor educators, state guidance supervisors, and professional consultants.

The National Career Development Guidelines initiative is a project that is designed to strengthen and improve comprehensive, competency-based career development programs at schools, colleges, human service agencies, and community organizations nationwide. The Guidelines serve as a blueprint for states, educational institutions, and other organizations to use to develop effective career guidance programs.

Donna and other cadre members participated in an intensive weekend of training in September. The cadre's goals are to 1) conduct awareness sessions, 2) train local state teams, 3) provide technical assistance to local site teams, 4) use Guidelines materials in pre-service education programs, and 5) assist states in developing statewide dissemination plans.

Donna says she is looking forward to adoption of the Guidelines in Montana. She states that the "School to Work Transition" project in Great Falls is an example of one attempt in Montana to begin addressing some of the competencies from the Guidelines.

The Guidelines project is a National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) sponsored venture. The Guidelines are currently being used in about 20 states. Efforts are underway to implement the Guidelines in Montana in the near future.

A Strategy to Promote Interest in Nontraditional Careers

Do your female students shy away from nontraditional careers? Have them study graphs of the earnings of male- and female-dominated occupations!

Vocational educators who would like to respond to legislative initiatives to promote sex equity frequently find that girls and women are reluctant to enroll in programs that are nontraditional for their sex. To promote such enrollments, the University of North Florida Leadership Development Program for Sex Equity has developed a strategy that has captured the attention of both vocational educators and students across Florida: graphic representation of the pay differentials between traditional "men's" and "women's" work.

Following the sequence of activities dictated below, vocational teachers in Montana can learn the strategy in a one-hour inservice session. Prior to the session, the presenter needs to prepare four handouts, Figures 1-4. With the handouts in hand, the presenter proceeds this way:

Why be concerned?
(15 minutes)

1. Introduce the topic: "Nontraditional Occupations: Why Be Concerned?" Ask for volunteers to give a brief definition of a nontraditional occupation. By commonly accepted definitions, an occupation is nontraditional for one sex if 75 percent or more of the workers in that occupation are of the opposite sex.

2. Explain the importance of promoting nontraditional enrollments by emphasizing four points:

   - Women are returning to short- and long-term vocational education programs in search of both skill training and personal enrichment.

   - While women are entering the workforce in record numbers, they largely remain clustered in "women's occupations" that tend to be sedentary, to offer the lowest wages, and to provide limited opportunity for advancement.

   - Vocational education programs that are nontraditional for women offer them the opportunity to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

   - Vocational educators bear the enormous responsibility of providing informed advice to those who consult with them on potential programs of study.

What are the stereotypes?
(20 minutes)

3. Distribute the checklist of selected occupations of vocational graduates (Figure 1) and have participants fill it out. Then for each occupation listed, ask for a show of hands of those who marked "F" or "M." (Generally there will be a consensus.)

4. Appoint a participant to record the responses on newsprint, then ask: "How does it happen that these occupations are traditional for one sex?" The answers may include such reasons as "Men's jobs require muscles," "Women have been socialized to those occupations," "Women don't want to get dirty," and "Most men couldn't stand to be laughed at in a woman's occupation."

5. Direct the ensuing discussion by commenting: "Many of the reasons occupations are stereotyped have to do with attitudes or prior sex role socialization. They tend to be emotional. One way to attack emotional stereotypes is to introduce students to factual information about occupations, and particularly factual information that has to do with wages."

Figure 1

Checklist: Selected Occupations of Vocational Graduates

Traditional vocational enrollments often reinforce occupational stereotypes. Examine the list of occupations given below. In the space to the left, put an "F" by occupations you consider to be traditionally female and an "M" by occupations you consider to be traditionally male.

___ Auto mechanic
___ Plumber
___ Cashier-checker
___ Clerk-typist
___ Cosmetologist
___ Drafter, civil
___ Electrical repairer
___ Electronics mechanic
___ Keypunch operator
___ Carpenter
___ Medical secretary
___ Paralegal assistant
___ Cabinetmaker
___ Receptionist
___ Sales clerk
___ Secretary
___ Teller
___ Painter
___ Bookkeeper
___ Security guard

6. Ask participants to give their best estimates of the annual salaries earned by workers in three or four of the "female" or "male" occupations on the list.

What is the earnings differential?
(10 minutes)

7. Take five minutes to distribute and discuss the list of Montana average wage rates for the stereotyped occupations (Figure 2) and ask participants to compare their own estimates with the actual figures. How accurate were they?

   Some participants may want to challenge the accuracy of the handout. Explain that the figures represent actual wages for Montana occupations in 1986, which is the latest wage data available for the state. Encourage participants to identify methods they use to periodically update their personal storehouse of occupational information.

Figure 2

Montana Average Wages for Sex-Stereotyped Occupations

	Occupations	Average Hourly Wage	Extrapolated Annual Salary
M	Auto mechanic	$10.49	$21,819
M	Plumber	$12.74	$26,500
F	Cashier-checker	$4.75	$9,880
F	Clerk-typist	$5.87	$12,210
F	Cosmetologist	$3.93	$8,174
M	Drafter, civil	$9.33	$19,406
M	Electrical repairer	$14.99	$31,179
M	Electronics mechanic	$13.34	$27,747
F	Keypunch operator	$5.78	$12,022
M	Carpenter	$9.51	$19,781
F	Medical secretary	$6.78	$14,102
M	Paralegal assistant	$8.69	$18,075
M	Cabinetmaker	$7.28	$15,142
F	Receptionist	$5.28	$10,982
F	Sales clerk	$4.67	$9,714
F	Secretary	$6.50	$13,520
F	Teller	$5.42	$11,274
M	Painter	$10.76	$22,381
F	Bookkeeper	$6.62	$13,770
M	Security guard	$5.77	$12,002

Average annual earnings of Montana workers, 1986
SOURCE: Montana Supply/Demand Report

8. Now distribute the graphic display of average annual wages (Figure 3). Call attention to the impact of wage differentials when there is a deliberate effort to use graphics to communicate differences between annual earnings in female- and male-dominated occupations.

9. Ask participants what **generalization** about occupational stereotyping they will communicate to both female and male students.

What is the local application? (10 minutes)

10. Distribute the fourth handout (Figure 4). This is a blank form made up like Figure 3. The title is "Wage Differentials by Current Vocational Programs."

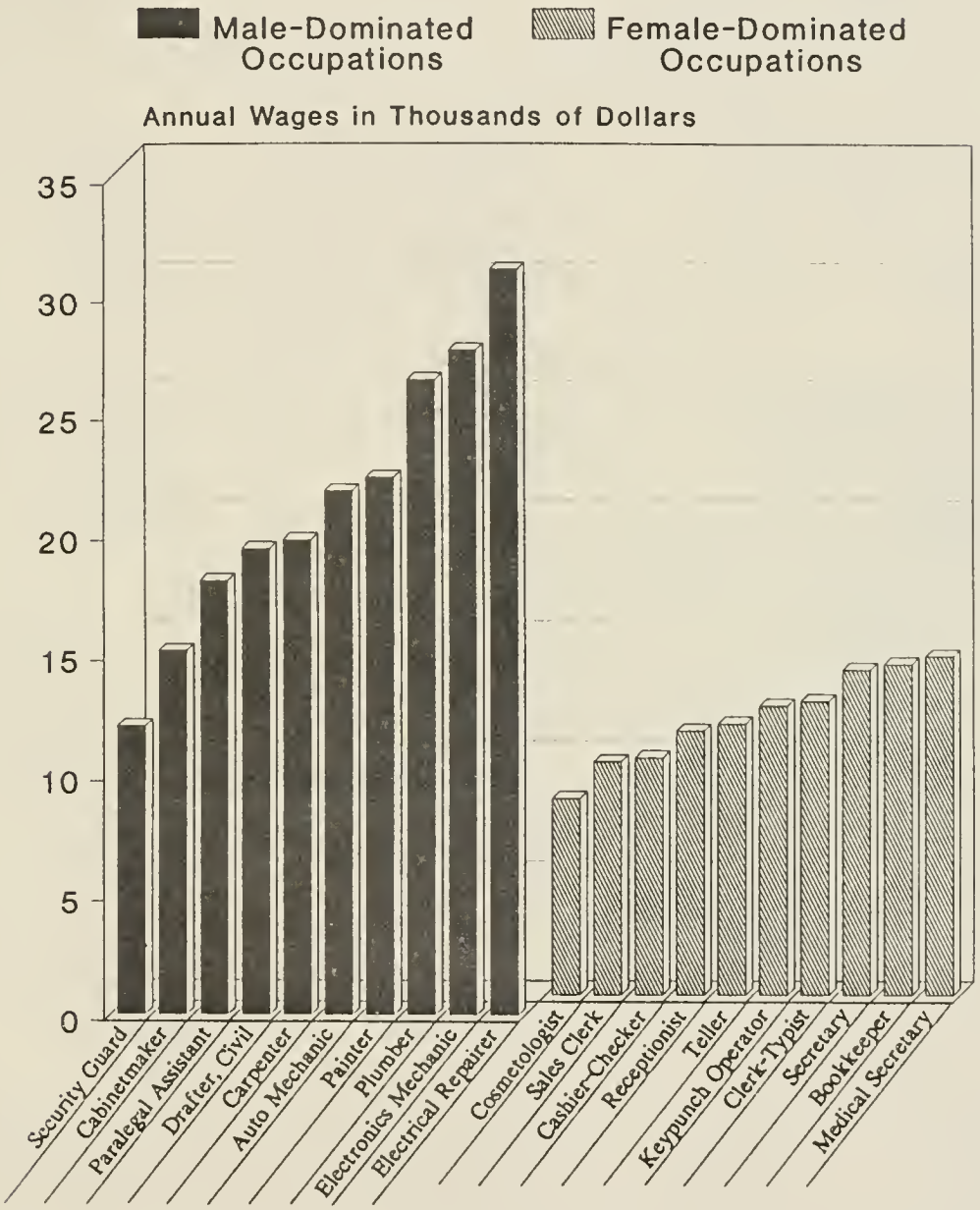
On a blackboard or newsprint, list the following instructions for preparing the graph:

- Across the bottom, list the occupational training programs currently offered at your school.
- Consult the most recent "Montana Supply/Demand Report" (this publication is available from the Montana SOICC) to find the average annual wage offered for each occupation.
- Plot the wage information in two lines, one for female-dominated occupations and one for male-dominated occupations.

Go over the directions orally, making sure the participants understand how to graph the wage rates of occupations for which they prepare students.

Figure 3

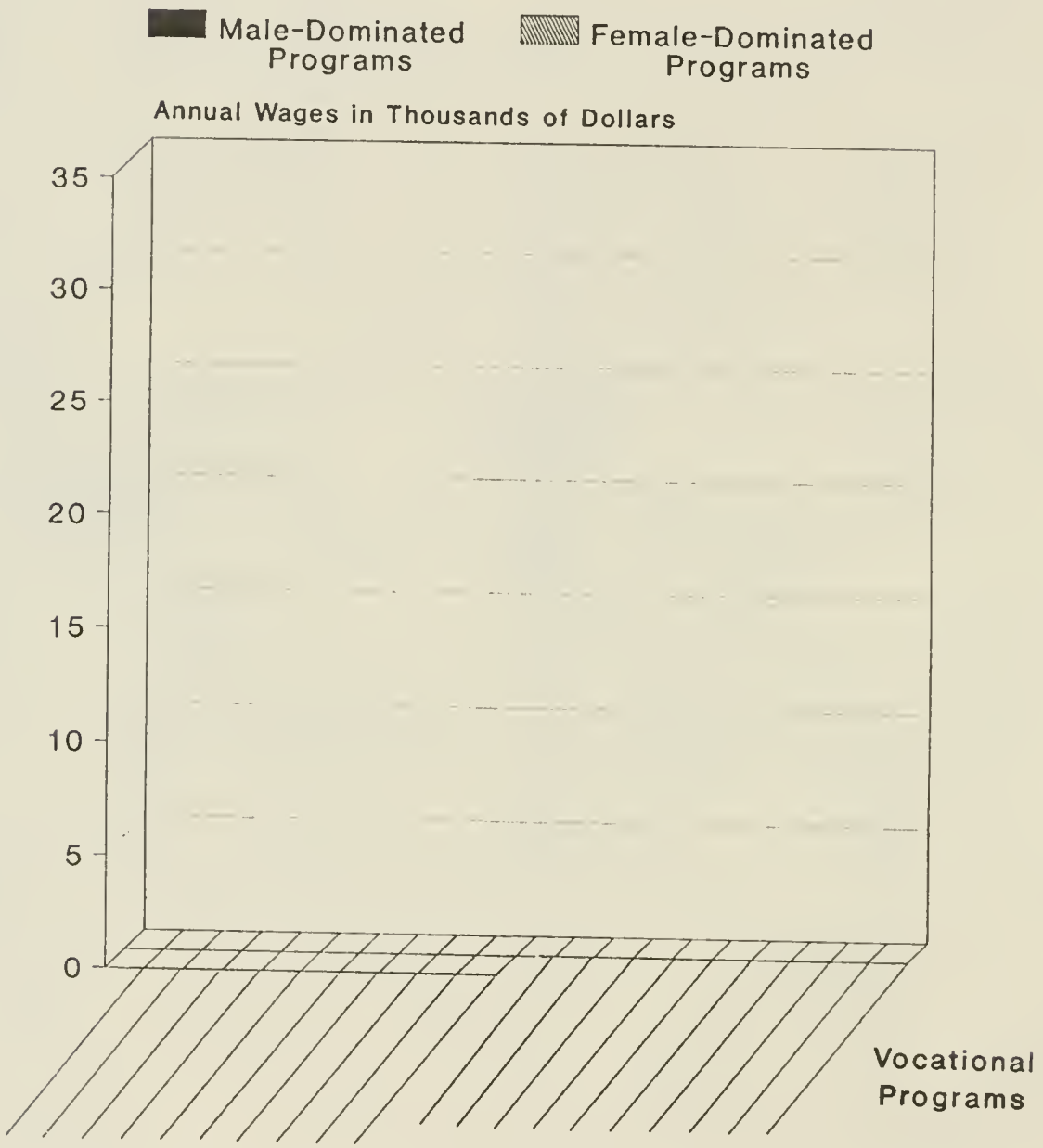
Wage Differentials in Sex-Stereotyped Occupations*



* Average annual earnings of Montana workers, 1986
SOURCE OF WAGE: Montana Supply/Demand Report

Figure 4

Wage Differentials by Current Vocational Programs*



* Average annual earnings of Montana workers, 1986
SOURCE OF WAGE: Montana Supply/Demand Report

11. Explain that the wage differentials graph is a strategy to convey to students the significant economic differences between occupations and the rationale for nontraditional career choices. Ask for suggestions on ways to use such graphs to stimulate interest in nontraditional career exploration.

    Ideas can include enlarging the graph for bulletin board displays, asking students to graph wage information on careers they are considering, asking guidance counselors to incorporate the graphs in their occupational information resource materials, and providing copies of the graphs to all school personnel.

12. Invite participants to share similar "object lessons" they have found to be successful in promoting nontraditional enrollments in vocational programs.

Follow-up plans
(5 minutes)

13. Give the participants a plan for follow-up. Invite them to share their "Current Vocational Programs" graphs when they are completed. Follow-up is a good way to find out whether a strategy is working and to reinforce participants' motivation to carry it out.

SOURCE: "A Strategy to Promote Interest In Nontraditional Careers" by Bette J. Soldwedel, **Vocational Education Journal**, April 1989; "Montana Supply/Demand Report," Sixth Edition

Workshops Well Received

Approximately 75 counselors and job training professionals from around the state attended workshops sponsored by the Montana Career Information System (Montana CIS) this fall. The workshops introduced the National Career Development Guidelines published this year by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC).

Anne Wolfinger, Montana CIS Service Manager was joined by Bob Arnold, SOICC Director and Judy Birch, Guidance Specialist with the Office of Public Instruction to conduct the workshops.

Workshop participants discussed the significance of the Guidelines. They learned how labor market information and career information can be helpful in implementing the Guidelines.

The workshops were funded through a Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act grant from the Office of Public Instruction.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

it's A New World

A career video for middle school students

NOW AVAILABLE FOR $20

Do your students ever ask: "Why do I have to study science? Why do I have to take math?"

"it's A New World" is a 37-minute career video for middle/junior high school students that can play a part in improving students' attitudes toward science and math courses. The video offers occupational information, and highlights the importance of a good educational background in math and science--and its relevance to careers.

"it's A New World" provides information through interviews with professionals in these high demand occupations: computer programmer, nurse, accountant, technical sales representative, industrial engineer, and electronic engineering technician.

Our nation's future hinges on having an ample supply of people who achieve in mathematics and science, are science literate, and can perform technical jobs with world-class competence.

Until now, the roles of minorities, women, and people with disabilities in science and engineering have been widely seen only as an equity issue, rather than as the key to our future national strength in science and technology. Teachers, principals, and counselors should create a school and classroom climate of high expectations in mathematics and science for all students--particularly minorities, women, and students with disabilities.

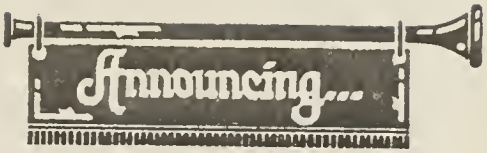
Middle/junior high school students are at their first formal choice-points, and it is a crucial time to work on student motivation and aspirations. "it's A New World" motivates students to keep their career options open by taking math and science courses in middle school, high school, and beyond.

To have a significant influence on student behavior in choice making, education experiences need to be timely and immediate to the questions students are asking themselves, such as: "Why should I take science or math?"

"it's A New World" shows the immediate relevance of academic content to salable skills.

Middle/junior high school years are a time when sex differences exert important influences on curriculum choices. Traditional sex-role expectations are evident before the eighth grade. Counselors and teachers must actively bolster women's and minorities' career and math-related, self-competence expectations if more informed and non-stereotyped career choices are to be made. "it's A New World" emphasizes sex and race equity by showing women, minorities, and people with disabilities in non-traditional work roles.

"it's A New World" includes a VHS videotape and curriculum guide. The videotape and curriculum guide are being offered for $20 by the Montana SOICC, P.O. Box 1728, Helena, Montana 59624. Call the Montana SOICC at 444-2741 if you are interested in ordering the tape and curriculum guide.



The Montana Training Institution Directory

The Montana Training Institution Directory was developed as a supplemental module for the Micro-OIS. The Directory provides additional information about the supply data in this system.

The Directory can be used to show training programs provided by the different training institutions in Montana, training institutions and programs of training provided at the county level, or to trace the connection between completers of a training program and specific training institutions.

The Directory and user manual are available from the Montana SOICC. The Directory is available on diskette for use on an IBM personal computer or IBM compatible personal computer. The Directory can also be installed on a hard disk IBM or compatible personal computer.

There is no charge for the Montana Training Institution Directory. If you are interested in receiving the Directory, please fill out the order form below and return to the Montana SOICC, P.O. Box 1728, Helena, Montana 59624.

Montana Training Institution Directory
Order Form

Type of PC: _____

Diskette size: _____ Hard Disk Installation: _____

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Name: _____

Address: _____

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Phone: _____

Return form to:
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Kate Kahle, Editor
Montana SOICC Newsletter
Volume Seven - Number Three

Robert N. Arnold
Program Officer
Montana SOICC

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